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THE LATE PROFESSOR ROMANES'S THOUGHTS ON RELIGION.

ALL THE publications of the Open Court Publishing Company, purely theoretical though they may appear to be, are brought out with a very practical end in view, which is nothing less than the reconstruction of religion upon the broad basis of modern science. When we undertake to bring out scientific works, such as Ribot's psychological inquiries, Max Müller's expositions of the nature of language and of thought, Ernst Mach's history of mechanics and his popular lectures on the methods of scientific research, we do so because we trust that the spread of sound science is the best and most effective propaganda of true religion. We acquired from Prof. George John Romanes the right of publishing the American edition of his book, *Darwin and After Darwin*, because we recognise in the doctrine of evolution one of the most important and fundamental religious truths, upon the basis of which the old traditional dogmas will have to be revised and radically remodelled; and we have just now brought out the American edition of the same scientist's posthumous *Thoughts on Religion*. It is this latter book to which the present article is devoted, for it seems necessary to explain why we accept for publication a book which in many important points differs from our own solution of the religious problem.

In our opinion, science and religion are not two separate spheres which must be kept apart, lest the one should interfere with the other; but, on the contrary, both form integral parts of man's spiritual being and are closely interwoven as the web and woof of our souls. Science is the search for truth, including the

results of the search ; it is the best recognition of the truth according to the most accurate and painstaking methods at our command ; and religion is the endeavor to lead a life in agreement with the truth. What is religion but truth in its moral bearings upon practical life !

In opposition to this standpoint the *Thoughts on Religion* by Professor Romanes are antiscientific and agnostic, indeed, they stand in certain respects so much in contrast to the labor of his life, as to appear a disavowal of his former position.

While our religious convictions are quite definite and outspoken we do not propound them dogmatically. We simply submit them to the world for consideration ; we solicit criticism from all quarters, because we trust that they can stand the severest strictures. However, supposing they could be proved to be erroneous, we shall not hesitate to publicly confess our errors ; for it is not our aim to propagate our views because they are ours, but because we believe that they are true. If it be right that we must in religious questions sacrifice our intellect and cease thinking, let the truth prevail.

When the doctrine of evolution first dawned upon Romanes, it came to him, not as a religious idea, but as a revolutionary doctrine, which was slowly but radically destroying the very basis of his most sacred belief ; and in order to understand the struggles which at that time distracted the mind of the young scientist, we ought to bear in mind that he was in his inmost nature not only deeply religious, but even uncommonly reverent and pious. Judging from his essay on Prayer, which he wrote when still a youth, in 1873, and by which he gained the Burney Prize at Cambridge, he was possessed of a childlike trust in the Lord, his Creator and Heavenly Father, whom he regarded as governing the world by general laws. Would a youth so settled in his convictions give up his faith when confronted with scientific conceptions irreconcilable with the errors of his traditional religion ? How could he help it ? Science is not of human make ; science is the superhuman power of the silent voice of the Holy Spirit, who reveals himself to

mankind in an accumulative revelation, and no one can withdraw himself from its irresistible influence.

Romanes had thoroughly imbibed the rigid definitions of the traditional dogmatism. In order to substantiate the so-called orthodox conception of Christianity our ecclesiastical instructors have gotten into the habit of telling us again and again that there is no religion save such as is theistic, and that there is no theism, save such as is a belief in a personal God, and a personal God means a distinct individual being with an ego-consciousness like that found in man, only on an infinitely higher plane—a view which we call anthropotheism. Accepting explanations of religion, such as these, it was natural that Romanes, as soon as he became convinced of the errors of his narrow church-theism, should fall a prey to a desolate scepticism, and already in 1876, if not sooner,¹ he wrote a book entitled *A Candid Examination of Theism by Physicus*, which analyses the crude conception of the traditional God-idea, and finds it wanting.

We quote the following passage from the book, which is sufficient evidence of the author's sincerity :

"And now, in conclusion, I feel it is desirable to state that any antecedent bias with regard to Theism which I individually possess is unquestionably on the side of traditional beliefs. It is therefore with the utmost sorrow that I find myself compelled to accept the conclusions here worked out ; and nothing would have induced me to publish them, save the strength of my conviction that it is the duty of every member of society to give his fellows the benefit of his labors for whatever they may be worth. Just as I am confident that truth must in the end be the most profitable for the race, so I am persuaded that every individual endeavor if unbiassed and sincere, ought without hesitation to be made the common property of all men, no matter in what direction the results of its promulgation may appear to tend. And so far as the ruination of individual happiness is concerned, no one can have a more lively perception than myself of the possibly disastrous tendency of my work. So far as I am individually concerned, the result of this analysis has been to show that, whether I regard the problem of Theism on the lower plane of strictly relative probability, or on the higher plane of purely formal considerations, it equally becomes my obvious duty to stifle all belief of the kind which I conceive to be the noblest, and to discipline my intellect with regard to this matter into an attitude of the purest scepticism. And forasmuch as I am far from being able to agree

¹The book appeared in 1878 (at Trübner's), and we read in the preface that it was written *several* years before, but had been left unpublished.

with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the 'new faith' is a desirable substitute for the waning splendor of 'the old,' I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept to 'work while it is day' will doubtless but gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words that 'the night cometh when no man can work,' yet when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it,—at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. For whether it be due to my intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the requirements of the age, or whether it be due to the memory of those sacred associations which to me at least were the sweetest that life has given, I cannot but feel that for me, and for others who think as I do, there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton,—Philosophy having become a meditation, not merely of death, but of annihilation, the precept *know thyself* has become transformed into the terrific oracle to Œdipus: 'Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art.' "

While Romanes pursued his scientific work unswervingly, completing works on *The Mental Evolution in Man*, *The Mental Evolution in Animals* and *Animal Intelligence*, and beginning his *Darwin and After Darwin*; he wrote several essays bearing on religion. They are:

1. "Mind and Motion." A lecture, published in *The Contemporary Review*, July, 1885, p. 74.
2. "The World as an Eject," published in *The Contemporary Review* in 1886, p. 44.
3. "The Evidence of Design in Nature," a paper read before the Aristotelian Society in 1889, and published in its proceedings as a contribution to a Symposium.
4. Three articles on the "Influence of Science Upon Religion," written in 1889, but remaining unpublished for unknown reasons.

In these essays Professor Romanes takes an unequivocal stand on the ground of monism, yet when he comes to the question of theism he assumes an attitude of agnosticism which does not venture to decide the problem but "leaves a clear field of choice between theism and atheism." The secret reason of his position which probably was hidden from his own mind was in our opinion this: he felt instinctively that there was some truth in theism, yet he could not discover by his reasoning powers what it was. He saw the errors

of the narrow church-theism, but he did not venture to broaden his idea of God so as to conform it to his better scientific insight.

Professor Romanes in 1892 sent us a copy of his article "The World as an Eject," suggesting its republication by The Open Court Publishing Company, which for reasons too long to enumerate we had to refuse. Professor Romanes's world-conception coincided with the monism of *The Monist* in all important points except in one—his agnostic reservation of leaving the question of theism undecided. I could not republish his essay, but I took the occasion to discuss our differences in an editorial article (which appeared in Vol. III, No. 2, pp. 249–257 of *The Monist*) hoping that he would either refute my strictures and fortify his arguments or alter his position which appeared to me half-hearted and untenable, and adopt a more scientific God-conception. At that time Professor Romanes's health broke down and I did not consider it proper to urge a reply from him before he would have thoroughly recovered. He went in the winter of 1892–1893 to Madeira, and it is probable that he never read what I had to say about his agnostic view of theism.

The agnostic reserve of Professor Romanes's position might have easily appeared to his readers as an unwillingness to decide a dilemma, which, whatever horn he chose, could only implicate him in troubles of various kinds; but the fact is that he was sorely perplexed in his own mind. On the religious problem all his sympathies were enlisted against his rational faculties, and he saw no other hope for the defence of the faith which he so dearly but vainly longed for, than by denying his rational faculties the right to have anything to say in the matter, and this, his attitude, he called, in distinction to the Spencerian agnosticism, "pure agnosticism."

Between the lines of Romanes's *Thoughts on Religion* we can see the distress of his soul. What a poor evidence is agnosticism! It is like a straw to which a drowning man desperately but vainly clings. For it goes without saying that agnosticism of every color is equally favorable to dogmatic Christianity to Mohammedanism, Brahmanism, theosophy, and mysticism of any description, as to Freethought and Nihilism.

With such sentiments Professor Romanes pondered in the last

year of his life on the problems of theism, faith, free will, the existence and origin of evil, causation and creation, regeneration, revelation, the miracles, Christian dogmas, such as the trinity, and incarnation, the fall of Adam, and Christian demonology. The notes which he wrote down on these topics a few months before his death were originally intended to counteract or offset in a measure, to his own or other people's satisfaction, the propositions contained in the *Candid Examination of Theism by Physicus*. He expected to work out a book on the subject which should appear under the title *A Candid Examination of Religion by Metaphysicus*, for he had found in the metaphysical *x* the sole place of safety for the God of Christianity. After his death the notes were handed to the Rev. Charles Gore, Canon of Westminster and a friend of the deceased scientist, who was to do with them what he thought best. Canon Gore has decided upon their publication together with other materials and his own editorial comments, and the book lies now before us under the title "*Thoughts on Religion*, by the late George John Romanes, Edited by Charles Gore, M. A., Canon of Westminster."

The book contains :

1. Two essays by Romanes on the "Influence of Science Upon Religion," written in 1891, the third essay being omitted, because, as the editor declares, "Romanes's views on the relation between science and faith in revealed religion are better and more maturely expressed in the notes" (pp. 37-88).
2. The Notes for a work on *A Candid Examination of Religion* (pp. 91-183).
3. Editorial Comments. Both parts open with editorial prefaces (pp. 5-33, p. 105, and pp. 91-96), and the whole book closes with a "Note by the Editor" (p. 184).

Mr. Gore claims that "both Essays and Notes represent the same tendency of a mind from a position of unbelief in the Christian revelation toward one of belief in it" (p. 6); and although Romanes's conviction cannot be described as "a position of settled orthodoxy," although he did not recover "the activity or habit of faith," we are told (on p. 184) that he yet "returned before his death to that full, deliberate communion with the Church of Jesus Christ

which he had for so many years been conscientiously compelled to forego."

There are people who think that there is no salvation except in the Church. For their benefit be it stated that such a man as Professor Romanes was in the darkest days of his boldest scepticism a better Christian than many a minister and preacher, who finds no difficulty in avowing allegiance to the thirty-nine articles of the Anglican Church.

* * *

We attach to the book a great importance, for it proves the depth of Romanes's religious sentiment. There may be a doubt whether it was wise and just to publish the notes—just toward the sacred memory of the deceased ; and we feel sure that many friends of the late Professor Romanes will regret the appearance of the booklet, for the notes are quite unfinished and incoherent. Indeed, the looseness of argumentation indicates that their author, when he penned them, was no longer at his best. Nevertheless, we believe Canon Gore was right in not withholding them from the world, because Romanes was great enough even for his weaker productions to command a general interest, the more so as they throw a searchlight into the most secret recesses of his innermost soul ; and it is of interest to us to know not only how a man like Romanes argued but also what he longed for and on what side his sympathies were most strongly enlisted. Taking the notes as they stand, and bearing in mind that their author's life was cut short before he could revise them and work his way out from the narrowness of agnosticism into a clear comprehension of the glory of true religion, we take them as witnesses of Romanes's deep love of God, whom he still harbored in his heart after his mind through scientific investigations had lost belief in his existence.

We can now understand what an abyss of desolation lies in the question which Romanes uttered in the concluding chapter, page 418, of the first volume of *Darwin and After Darwin*, "Where is now thy God?" And his answer bids us be resigned. He says : "And when the cry of Reason pierces the heart of Faith, it remains for Faith to answer now as she has always answered before—

and answered with that trust which is at once her beauty and her life,—Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself.”

Concerning Professor Romanes's progress from a position of unbelief toward one of belief, we are unable to discover any evidence of great consequence. For the agnostic position as the sole refuge for believers is already indicated in the *Candid Examination of Theism*. Even here Romanes says :

“Although the latter deductions have clearly shown the existence of Deity to be superfluous in a scientific sense, the formal considerations in question have no less clearly opened up beyond the sphere of science a possible *locus* for the existence of Deity; so that if there are any facts supplied by experience for which the atheistic deductions appear insufficient to account, we are still free to account for them in a relative sense by the hypothesis of Theism. And, it may be urged, we do find such an unexplained residuum in the correlation of general laws in the production of cosmic harmony.”

On the other hand, instead of retracting his opinions in the Notes, Romanes expressly retained them, only proposing several important modifications and limitations. While he feels that “further thought has enabled” him “to detect serious errors or rather oversights,” in his book he still thinks “that from the premises there laid down the conclusions result in due logical sequence.” He continues, “as a matter of mere ratiocination, I am not likely ever to detect any serious flaws, especially as this has not been done by anybody else during the many years of its existence.”

Romanes finds two faults with his former work : undue confidence in merely syllogistic conclusions, and a lack of care in examining the foundations of his criticism. He says :

“The metaphysics of Christianity may be all false in fact, and yet the spirit of Christianity may be true in substance—i. e. it may be the highest ‘good gift from above’ as yet given to man.”

How true ! But granted that it is true, should we not rouse ourselves to investigate what is the spirit of Christianity so that we may do away with its false metaphysics? Professor Romanes turns for help at the wrong door. Agnosticism, even Professor Romanes's “pure agnosticism,” will never make us take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees ; and agnosticism,

if we are willing to believe, makes us credulous, while if we are unwilling to believe, makes us indifferent, for what is the use of our troubles if the truth lies in some superscientific field, where we can never hope to approach it.

Passing by the comments on Adam and the Fall, the blindness of reason with regard to the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity and similar utterances,—topics the serious discussion of which we should not expect from the author of *Darwin and After Darwin*,—we think that the weakest parts of Professor Romanes's arguments are his contradictory applications of his principle of pure agnosticism. In one place he complains about "*professed*" agnostics who refused to go to a famous spiritualist, or to test the art of a mind-reader, and he says of them that they violated their philosophy by their conduct (p. 109), yet when dogmatic questions appear, such as whether Jesus was the son of God, he argues that we are, *quod* pure agnostics, logically forbidden to touch them (p. 106 and *passim*).

After all, Professor Romanes makes less use of his agnosticism than appears consistent and attempts a reconciliation between religion and science. He says :

"I intend to take science and religion in their present highly developed states as such and show that on a *systematic examination of the latter by the methods of the former*,¹ the 'conflict' between the two may be not merely 'reconciled' as regards the highest generalities of each, but entirely abolished in all matters of detail which can be regarded as of any great importance."

The principle of deciding the conflict between science and religion by "a systematic examination of the latter by the methods of the former" is the fundamental contention of that aspiration which we have defined as the "Religion of Science." In full agreement with the maxim of the Religion of Science, Romanes insists upon theists abandoning all the assumptions of which they have been guilty, saying :

"True religion is indeed learning her lesson that something is wrong in her method of fighting, and many of her soldiers are now waking up to the fact that it is here that her error lies—as in past times they woke up to see the error of deny-

¹ Italics are ours.

ing the movement of the earth, the antiquity of the earth, the origin of species by evolution, etc."

The only possible condition to fighting, says Romanes, lies in the distinction between the natural and the supernatural—a distinction that has always by both sides been regarded as sound (p. 121). He now proposes to rescind the boundary line that separates the supernatural from the natural and says: "Once grant that the supernatural is 'natural' and all possible ground of dispute is removed."¹

This is the reconciliation between religion and science which we propose, and it may be formulated in analogy with Christ's words: "Render unto Science the things that are Science's!"

* * *

There are many more things that ought to be said, but they are of less importance, and we can only lightly touch upon some of them in a few disconnected remarks.

We believe that Romanes's distinction between Huxley's and Spencer's agnosticism is neither clear nor correct (p. 108). Professor Huxley's agnosticism is not what Romanes defines it, viz., "an attitude of reasoned ignorance touching everything that lies beyond the sphere of sense-perception." Mathematics lies beyond the sphere of sense-perception, yet Huxley does not extend his agnosticism to mathematical methods or conclusions.

The fact that St. Paul's epistles are regarded by the critics as genuine is mentioned three times (pp. 155, 168, 169), and it is claimed that this is "enough to show the belief of Christ's contemporaries" (p. 169). Indeed! But what of it? Have we not sufficient evidence of the belief of our own contemporaries in the various Christs who have risen among us? Schweinfurth and Teed are living in our midst, and the authenticity of their publications cannot

¹ Compare on the supernatural such passages in *The Monist* editorials as Vol. V, No. 1, p. 99: "We deny the existence of the supernatural in a dualistic sense; but suppose we call such higher features of nature as appear in man's ethical aspirations hyperphysical or supernatural because they rise above the lower and purely physical elements of the universe, we must confess that the supernatural lies hidden in the natural and is destined to grow from it according to the cosmic law of existence."

be doubted. The important question is not whether or no Paul wrote his epistles, but whether the ethics of the epistles is good or bad, and, granting that Paul said many noble things, I yet wish to see the orthodox clergyman who would venture to defend Paul's low, not to say vulgar, conception of marriage!¹

Romanes speaks of "some superadded faculties of our mind," explaining them in one place as "the heart and the will," as the "religious instinct," and other moral sentiments, and also as "spiritual intuition," or an "organ of spiritual discernment." He glories in the "infinitude of mystery sufficient to satisfy the most exacting mystic." We say, that the "superadded faculties," which are such as man's conscience, his religious aspirations and moral ideals, do not lie without the pale of scientific investigation. On the contrary, the better we understand their nature, the greater is their chance of nobler development and purification.

Such phrases as "first cause" and "infinite mind," which are word-combinations without sense, abound unduly in the notes and help not a little to increase the difficulties which present themselves to the mind of Romanes and which have become sufficiently bewildering through the sensitiveness of his religious nature.²

Romanes gave a great deal of his thought to the problem of the existence of pain in the world. How is it possible that God, if he be good, can allow his creatures to be hopelessly exposed to "hideously cruel" and terrible sufferings? Romanes says in his second essay on "The Influence of Science Upon Religion," after

¹ "The sole motive for marriage which St. Paul proposes is, 'It is better to marry than to burn.' The holiest instincts that would induce men and women to join their fates in a sacred alliance are utterly ignored. Nothing is said of the mutual sympathy and friendship that bind soul to soul much more closely than sexual appetites. No consideration is taken of the children to be born, and the very lowest desires alone are given as an *excuse* for entering into the state of matrimony, the holiness of which St. Paul does not understand. His view of marriage proves that he had no right conception of the ethics of human sex-relations. We admire St. Paul in many respects, but we must say that his view of marriage is un-Christian; it is unworthy of his sacred office as an apostle; it is a blemish in our Bible."—*Science a Religious Revelation*, pp. 11–12.

² For an exposition of the errors which lie concealed in the phrase "first cause," see *Primer of Philosophy*, pp. 146–147, and *Fundamental Problems*, p. 88 et seq. As to "infinite mind," see *Homilies of Science*, p. 102 et seq.

speaking of the agonies of a rabbit panting in the iron jaws of a spring trap :

"What are we to think of a Being who, with yet higher faculties of thought and knowledge, and with an unlimited choice of means to secure His ends, has contrived untold thousands of mechanisms no less diabolical? In short, so far as Nature can teach us, or 'observation can extend,' it does appear that the scheme, if it is a scheme, is the product of a Mind which differs from the more highly evolved type of human mind in that it is immensely more intellectual without being nearly so moral."

The problem of the existence of pain in the world is an unsolvable mystery on the hypothesis of the traditional theism, and no theory of "probation" can satisfactorily explain the difficulty. But Romanes declares that, after all, we are not bound to adopt the idea of a "carpenter-God," as Mr. S. Alexander calls the anthropomorphic notion of a Creator (see p. 94), which implies that the world-order is "a scheme."

As to God's responsibility for pain, we should bear in mind that one of the most obvious features of anthropomorphism in the God-idea is the attribute of "moral goodness." In the same way that God is not an individual being, that he is not a huge ego or person like ourselves, but a superpersonal omnipresence, so he is neither moral, nor good, nor ethical; for God is the standard of goodness; he is the norm, conformity to which is the condition of ethics; he is the ultimate authority of all moral conduct. He is neither moral nor immoral, but unmoral, or let us say "supra-moral." If God were the carpenter of the world, he would be responsible for its laws and arrangements, including all the cruelties implied by them, and he could not escape the condemnation of immorality.

Romanes has found the right answer when he says:

"For aught that we can tell to the contrary, it may be quite as 'anthropomorphic' a notion to attribute morality to God as it would be to attribute those capacities for sensuous enjoyment with which the Greeks endowed their divinities. The Deity may be as high above the one as the other—or rather perhaps we may say as much external to the one as to the other. Without being supra-moral, and still less immoral, He may be un-moral: our ideas of morality may have no meaning as applied to Him."

Such was Romanes's pious disposition of mind, that, if it ever

had been possible to defend the old traditional dogmatism before the tribunal of reason, he would have done so, and we can repeat the quotation from Virgil, which D. F. Strauss applied to Schleiermacher, without hesitation of Romanes :

"Si Pergamum dextra defendi posset
Hac certe defensa fuisset !"

* * *

There is one more point to be mentioned. Professor Romanes adopted the idea so often proclaimed in the pulpit, that "no one can 'believe' in God, or *a fortiori* in Christ, without also a severe effort of will," and he adds :

"Yet the desire is not strong enough to sustain the will in perpetual action, so as to make the continual sacrifices which Christianity entails. Perhaps the hardest of these sacrifices to an intelligent man is that of his own intellect. At least I am certain that this is so in my own case.

Romanes rummages his brain for arguments to silence the voice of reason. He says (p. 167):

"The force of Butler's argument about our being incompetent judges is being more and more increased.

"The unbiassed answer of pure agnosticism ought reasonably to be, in the words of John Hunter, 'Do not think ; try.'"

And he tried ! What tortures must this man have suffered in his eagerness not to think but to believe ! His religious struggles may have been the physical cause of his premature death ; for distraction of mind is more injurious than overwork. And after all he was anxious to attempt the impossible. We read on pp. 132-133 :

"Yet I cannot bring myself so much as to make a venture in the direction of faith. For instance, regarded from one point of view it seems reasonable enough that Christianity should have enjoined the *doing* of the doctrine as a necessary condition to ascertaining (i. e. 'believing') its truth. But from another, and my more habitual point of view, it seems almost an affront to reason to make any such 'fool's experiment'—just as to some scientific men it seems absurd and childish to expect them to investigate the 'superstitious' follies of modern spiritualism. Even the simplest act of will in regard to religion—that of prayer—has not been performed by me for at least a quarter of a century, simply because it has seemed so impossi-

ble to pray, as it were, hypothetically, that much as I have always desired to be able to pray, I cannot will the attempt."¹

Is it not a shame on our Church dogmatism to let a man like Romanes, an intellectual giant torture himself, on the rack, in efforts to conform to the religion which he had been taught to love with all the fervor of his soul?² Professor Romanes imagined that God requested from him the sacrifice of his intellect, and what was he not willing to do for God's sake! As Abraham went out to sacrifice his only son Isaac, so Romanes seriously tried to slaughter his reason on the altar of faith.

My blood begins to boil at the thought, for I remember my own experiences and the dark hours of despair in which I had, against my own will, lost my God and my religion, and felt all the miseries of hell. However willing I was to sacrifice my vanity, my egotism, my pride, my pleasures and joys, my self and my fondest hopes, I was yet unable to surrender my better knowledge, and only after many hours of sore trial did I work my way out again into the glorious liberty of the children of God. I came to the conclusion that no such sacrifice is expected of us as a surrender of our intellect; for our intellect is but the reflexion of God's nature in our soul. Man's reason is the light of his life; it is a product of that world-logos which science traces in all natural laws, and it is the seal of man's divinity which constitutes his similarity to God.

¹ Kant condemns "the *prosopopœia*," or face-making, of "hypothetical" prayer as hypocrisy, and says: "The consequence of this is that he who has made great moral progress ceases to pray, for honesty is one of his principal maxims. And further, that those whom one surprises in prayer are ashamed of themselves."

² How true is what Mach says of the conflict between science and theology! In his *Science of Mechanics*, p. 446, we read: "It would be a great mistake to suppose that the phrase 'warfare of science' is a correct description of its general historic attitude toward religion, that the only repression of intellectual development has come from priests, and that if their hands had been held off, growing science would have shot up with stupendous velocity. No doubt, external opposition did have to be fought; and the battle with it was no child's play. But investigators have had another struggle on their hands, and by no means an easy one, the struggle with their own preconceived ideas." Professor Romanes is the most modern instance of the severity of the conflict which often distracts the soul of a scientist. Oh, what a noble mind was here o'erthrown—and by what? By his devotion to dogmas, the spirit of which he felt to be true, and the allegorical garb of which he knew to be full of errors.

What is the lesson of Romanes's *Thoughts on Religion*?

Romanes's posthumous work is a *mene tekel* which reminds us of the importance of the religious problem. We cannot and must not leave it unsettled in worldly indifference. We must attend to it and investigate it bravely and conscientiously. We can no longer denounce reason or silence our intellectual needs, for it is God himself who speaks in the voice of reason ; and the progress of science is his most glorious revelation which ecclesiasticism cannot smother. Indeed, the suppression of reason is the sin against the Holy Ghost which cannot be forgiven but will inevitably lead, if persisted in, to eternal perdition.

The sad case of Professor Romanes's religious struggles reminds us of the significant words of the late Field-Marshal von Moltke who, with reference to dogmatic religion, says in the posthumous, deeply religious "Thoughts of Comfort," which contain his confession of faith : "I am afraid that the zealot in the pulpit, who will persuade where he cannot convince, preaches Christians out of the church."

Our church Christianity is not as yet free from paganism. By paganism we understand a belief in the letter of parables or allegorical dogmas to the detriment of their spirit ; and tradition and habit combine to make our theologians worship the letter that killeth. A one-sided training warps their judgment. Their notions of God, the sacraments, miracles, inspiration, prayer, Christ's sonship, and other religious ideas are, as a rule, more pagan than they themselves are aware of. The constitutions of most churches are so formulated as to make a belief in the literal meaning of symbols the test of orthodoxy, and Christians are urged to set their trust upon myths. For the higher education of the clergy we would propose, therefore, that every theologian should study at least one of the natural sciences or mathematics. It would be the best way, perhaps the only way, to teach them the sternness of truth and to dispel their anthropomorphic notions of God.

The narrowness of ecclesiasticism has estranged many noble minds from religion. Let our clergy see to it that room be made for intellectuality in our churches ; and the light of science will purify

the dark corners in which the superstitions of past ages still continue to exercise their baneful influence.

Romanes has much to say of the inner voice, intuition, and inspiration, but whatever form the subjective instincts of our religious nature may take, they possess merely preliminary power of decision and have no authority in comparison with objectively demonstrable truth. The verdict of conscience is very valuable, because it frequently reveals deep moral truth in a prophet's vision: yet is it neither absolute nor reliable, for it must seek its ratification before the tribunal of science. So far as human evolution has gone, science alone is possessed of that catholicity which is so sorely needed in religion.

There is no peace of soul for him whose religion has not passed through the furnace of scientific criticism, where it is cleansed of all the slag and dross of paganism. If God ever spoke to man, science is the fiery bush; and if there is any light by which man can hope to illumine his path so as to make firm steps, it is the light of science. Let us, therefore, make religion scientific and science religious. Let us, on the one hand, imbue religion with the spirit of science, with its rigorous criticism, strict exactness, and stern devotion to truth; and on the other hand, let us open our eyes to the moral and religious importance of the results of scientific inquiry. The ultimate aim of science is to reveal to man the religion of truth.

Let the light of science illumine both our minds and our sentiments; for science is holy, and the light of science is the dwelling-place of God.

EDITOR.